

# Saturday Magazine.

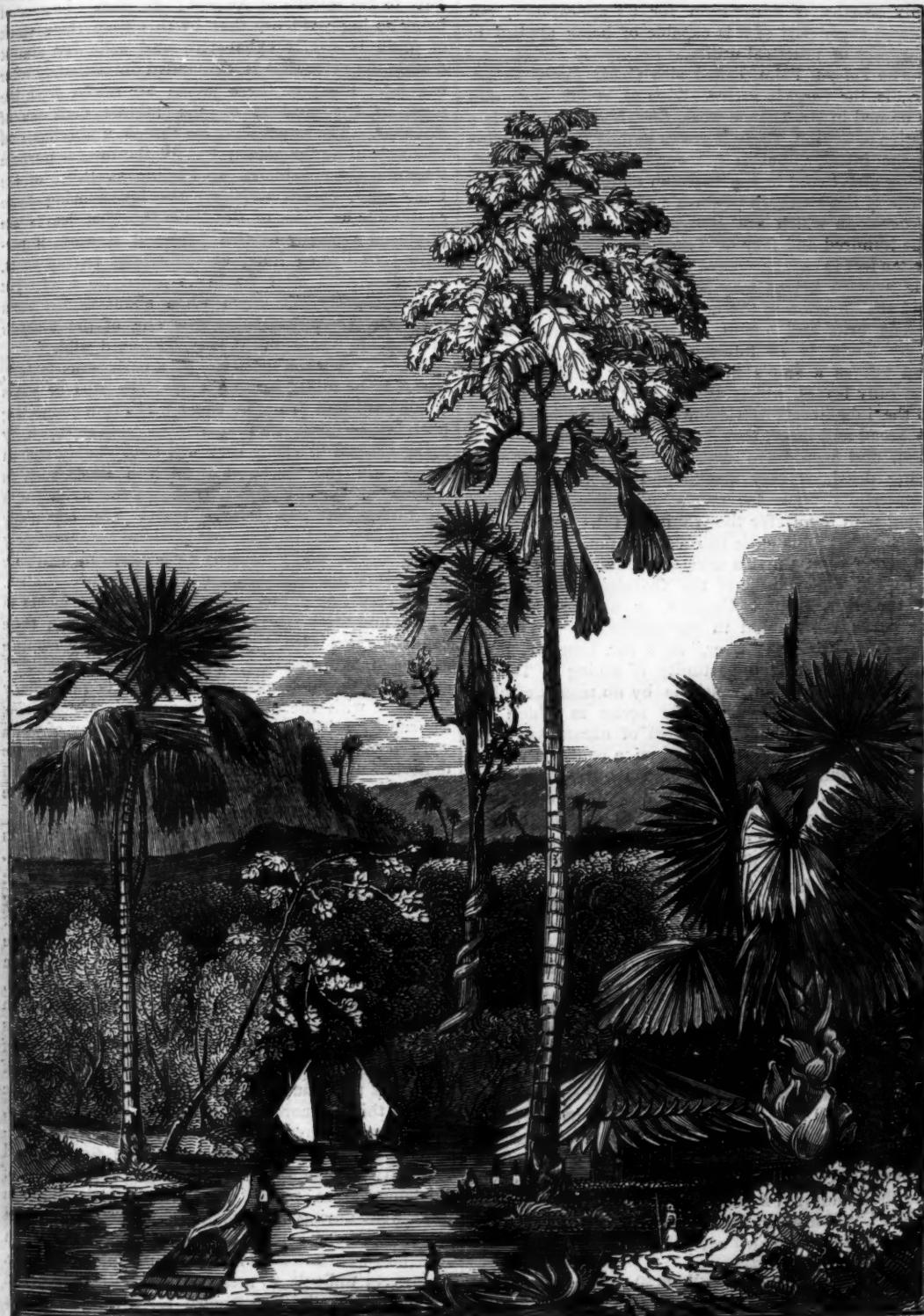
N<sup>o</sup>. 152. NOVEMBER

15<sup>TH</sup>, 1834.

PRICE  
ONE PENNY.



UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION,  
APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.



## THE TALAPAT PALM.

We have already\* described a singular specimen of the rich and varied natural productions of Ceylon, namely, the "Forbidden Fruit," or "Eve's Apple-tree," of that island. We now present an engraving from the original drawing† by the late Mr. S. Daniell, of another interesting object, belonging to the same class. The properties of the former plant, so far as they have yet been discovered, are of a noxious quality, but the noble Palm which we now describe, is not only worthy of admiration for its appearance, but almost every part of it is capable of being applied to purposes of practical utility.

The *Talapát* Palm, called also *Codda Pana*, *Talihā*, &c., is the *Corypha umbraculifera* of Willdenow: and is named in Dr. Davy's work *Licuala spinosa*. It is a native of Ceylon, where it grows among the mountains in the interior, but is not confined to that island, being also found in the Burman empire, and in some parts of the southern peninsula of India. The largest dimensions which are generally assigned to it, are one hundred and fifty or sixty feet in height, and nine or ten feet in circumference round the trunk. Perhaps the average height may be taken at about 140 feet, and the duration of the tree at about eighty years.

The brief and quaint, but accurate description of it by Knox is as follows. "This tree is as big and tall as a ship's mast, and very straight, bearing only leaves, which are of great use and benefit to the inhabitants of Ceylon: one single leaf being so broad and large, that it will cover fifteen or twenty men, and keep them dry when it rains. The leaf, being dried, is very strong and limber, and most wonderfully made for men's convenience to carry along with them, for though it be thus broad when open, yet it folds close like a lady's fan, and then is no bigger than a man's arm, and extremely light."

In the first volume of the *Oriental Annual*, edited by the Rev. Hobart Caunter, is a description of the scene represented in our engraving. "On the banks of the Calany river," says Mr. Caunter, "we had the gratifying opportunity of seeing a *Talipát* Palm in full blossom, which is by no means a thing of common occurrence. The scene in which we witnessed this remarkable effort of nature was very novel and imposing; it opened on a confined valley, through which the river wound its irregular way, and upon whose transparent bosom were several boats pursuing their quiet course, to the rough, but not discordant, song of the Ceylonese mariner. Our attention was also particularly arrested by several rafts on this river, over each of which a complete canopy was thrown, formed of a single leaf of the *Talipát*, that entirely covered both freight and crew.

"This extraordinary tree, certainly among the most singular productions of the vegetable kingdom, grows sometimes to the height of 200 feet. It blossoms only once during its existence, then dies, and in dying, like the fabled phoenix, sheds the seeds of a future generation around it: the flower, which bursts forth with a loud explosion, is occasionally thirty feet in length. The tree which we saw was not above 100 feet high, and measured nearly seven feet round; but they are sometimes much larger: the fruit is about the size of a twenty-four pound cannon-shot, and contains a thick pulp, with seeds like the *Palmyra*, (*Borassus flabelliformis*)."

Mr. Caunter adds, that a leaf of ordinary dimensions, which he saw, covered fourteen men; one

brought home by Mr. J. W. Bennett, and now to be seen in the Museum of King's College, London, measures thirty-six feet in circumference.

The pith resembles that of the Sago-palm, (*Caryota urens*), and is used as food in times of scarcity. This is also the case in Malabar, where, according to Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, one tree yields ten *puddies*, or rather more than two pecks and a quarter, of a powder fit for this purpose. The period when it is most employed in Malabar, is from the middle of July to the middle of August; the people in general being so improvident, that by this time their stock of grain is nearly exhausted, and sells for almost double the price that is demanded immediately after harvest. Many of these palms are raised from the seed, in the gardens of the middle divisions of Malabar. The leaves serve for thatch, umbrellas, and as a substitute for paper; but for the former purpose they are not considered so eligible as those of the Coco-palm, (*Cocos nucifera*), the latter being twice as durable as those of the *Talapát*. Ten leaves are produced annually by this palm: it flowers, if permitted to live so long, at the age of twenty years, and dies soon after having ripened its fruit; but it is generally cut down when about fifteen years old. Dr. Davy, who also saw one of the *Talapáts* in blossom, states that it is never found wild.

The leaves when dried are of a coriaceous texture, and may be folded up like a fan, the ribs or joints being hard and firm, like canes. The thin connecting portions, or folds, are prepared for writing upon, by being steeped in milk: they will then readily take an impression from the point of an iron *stylus*, such as was anciently used by the Romans‡ for writing on tablets of wax; these leaves are commonly termed *olas*, and books made of them are remarkably durable, for many which have been in existence upwards of five centuries, are in excellent preservation. Some very fine palms will yield folds five inches in width, and these are very valuable; but when these cannot be met with, the natives ingeniously contrive to fasten two together, and give them a polished surface of varnish and gilding: this is particularly the case with the splendid manuscripts containing the sacred writings of the Budd'hists, many of which were brought from Ava, during the late war: the material used as ink in these books is the gum obtained from a peculiar kind of tree, named by the Burmese, *Pheet-tsee*, or wood-oil tree.

All books relating to their religion, and other works of importance are written on these leaves; but in Malabar, accounts, and matters of inferior moment, are kept on the leaves of the palmyra. The Royal Asiatic Society possesses a fine collection of all the various kinds of palm-leaf manuscripts, and among them, a complete and perfect copy of the most important of the Budd'hist records, called the *Pansiyapanasjatakya*, which comprises 1172 leaves or 2344 pages, each leaf being inscribed on both sides. A native, it is estimated, will write on an average, about four of these pages each day; consequently, the copying of this book must have occupied about 586 days. The title of this extraordinary work, is derived from *pos*, five; *siya*, hundred; *panas*, fifty; *jatakya*, incarnations: signifying the history of the five hundred and fifty transmigrations, through every state of existence, from reptile to Deity, which Budd'ha underwent during his probation for that brightest and most sacred character: it was originally written in *Pali*, and was translated subsequently, into Singhalese. It is very difficult to meet with an entire copy, and the one in question was copied for SIR ALEXANDER

\* See *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. V., p. 90.

† The Palm in the annexed illustration is copied by permission, from a drawing in the collection formed by the Right Hon. Sir Alexander Johnston, to which we have before been indebted.

‡ See *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. V., p. 51.

JOHNSTON, (by whom it was presented to the Society,) by one of the most learned of the Budd'hist priests on the island of Ceylon.

Fans made of these leaves, were conferred on individuals as a mark of distinction; in the maritime provinces of Ceylon, they were allowed to have a certain number of those which folded up; in the inland provinces, they were formed into a circular shape, like shields, ornamented with talc and peacocks' feathers, and mounted on thin poles; small ones of the latter description were commonly used by the priests. Specimens of all these different kinds, are among the curious oriental collections in the Museum of the Royal Asiatic Society.

The leaf, when cut off at the extremity of the petioles, is said to be worn by persons travelling through the jungles, as a covering for the head: for this purpose only a part of the leaf is used; it forms a sort of wedge, or inverted keel, and thus enables the wearer to force aside the branches which impede his path.

#### A SPANISH WINE-STORE.

NOTHING at Xeres so much surprises the stranger, and is more worthy his inspection, than the *Bodegas*, or wine-vaults. The vintage itself, though interesting, has nothing particularly striking or picturesque in it; and after having walked through the broiling vineyards, and seen the process of picking and pressing the grapes, the curiosity of the traveller will be satisfied. There are few, however, who would not feel inclined to repeat their visits more than once to the bodega. The term wine-vaults is ill suited to convey an idea of these really splendid and extraordinary establishments, which I should class among the things best worth seeing in Spain. Instead of descending into a dark, low, grovelling, and musty magazine, like the London Dock wine-vaults, spacious as they are, you first pass through a street, one entire side of which, for the extent of a quarter of a mile, is occupied by one of these bodegas, and entering through large folding doors, you find yourself, to your astonishment, in what at first sight, appears to be a church of considerable dimensions, with a lofty roof, and divided into spacious aisles.

In the centre, you see in large characters, "Bodega of Jesus," and at the sides, "Nave of St. Andrew, St. Pedro, St. Jago." Your eye soon runs along the lower part of the building, and you see some thousand butts of wine ranged along the aisles, and against the arched pillars. A delicious fragrance, which you easily recognise, soon convinces you, notwithstanding the pious inscriptions you have been reading, that you are in a place exclusively dedicated to the enjoyments of the body.

On entering, you are waited upon by the superintendent of the bodega, who accompanies you through the different aisles, and who explains to you, on passing each barrel, the name, quality, age, and peculiar flavour of the wine within it; and, in order that you may understand it practically as well as theoretically, his observations are rendered clear and intelligible by a full glass of the delicious liquor. You proceed thus slowly through the whole range of the bodega, occasionally reposing like Bacchus, astride of a huge butt, and sipping bumpers of luscious Paxareti, fragrant Muscatel, or dark creamy Sherry, half a century old. While on the outside, every thing is blazing with the intense heat of the noon-tide; within, a delightful coolness and a soft mellow light prevail. In this manner you keep on quaffing the nectar which is so liberally supplied

you, until your senses become not quite so cool and collected as when you first entered, and you think it high time to make your retreat into the hot and dusty streets of Xeres.

Each wine establishment is conducted by an overseer, who is called the *Capatas*, and to whom is entrusted the purchasing of the different wines from the grower, the selection, and the mixing of them, as also the proving and tasting of the brandies required; in all of which, considerable judgment, skill, and experience, are required. These men, who, with nearly all employed in the bodegas, come from the mountains of Asturia, the Andalusians being too indolent, generally amass large fortunes by their care and frugality, and afterwards retire to their native province with the fruit of their industry.

The interior of one of these large bodegas may be compared to an immense hospital filled with patients, and the capataz or superintendent to the visiting physician. The former goes his daily round, accompanied by one of the superintendents of the bodega, whom we will call the apothecary. As he passes each butt, he begins his inquiry into the state of his patient; not by feeling his pulse, but by tapping, which is immediately performed by his attendant, who runs a spike into it, and presents him with a bumper of the contents. On tasting it, he may probably find that the wine is sick, as it is called by the merchants, being usually the case with young wines; a jar or two of brandy is therefore prescribed for the invalid, and the dose is forthwith administered. A second butt may be found to be equally qualmish, and is relieved in the same manner. The body or constitution of a third may probably be naturally weak and delicate; this is strengthened and improved by being mixed with wine which is sounder and stronger: while a fourth may be at the very last extremity, so as to require the application of musk. Speaking, however, more seriously, the bodega requires a great deal of skill, constant attention, a nice taste, and a discriminating judgment in the selection, not only of the wines, but of the brandies; in the improving the delicacy and flavour of the former, increasing or diminishing the body, dryness, and colour, and finally, giving such a variety of shades and differences in flavour and price, as may best suit the particular market, and gratify the taste and caprice of John Bull.

With this I shall conclude the remarks I have been making, merely observing that, however far we may be from drinking the sherry wine in its original state in our own country, owing to the impossibility of preserving it without the addition of a spirituous body, it is so very superior to the lighter kinds of sherry which are drank in their pure state, and which supply the general consumption in the country, that the last-mentioned wines cannot be compared to it. To the wealthy merchants and exporters of Xeres, we are, indeed, indebted for a wine, which, like port, may be called a sound British wine, and which is far more suitable to an English constitution and climate, than the lighter wines of France and the Rhine.

[*Sketches in Spain and Morocco*, by SIR ARTHUR DE CAPELL BROOKE, Bart.]

A SLOWNESS to applaud betrays a cold temper, or an envious spirit.—H. MORE.

THERE is always some love in esteem, and some esteem in love; some hatred in contempt, some contempt in hatred.—SKELTON.

WHERE there is yet shame, there in time may be virtue.—JOHNSON.

## WARWICK.

## ST. MARY'S CHURCH AND THE COUNTY-HALL.

WARWICK, the capital of the very important manufacturing county to which it gives its name, is a place of high antiquity. By the Britons it was called *Caer Guarvic*; the Romans are supposed to have had a fort or station here; and it appears to have been strongly fortified by the Saxons at the period of the Norman invasion. Its situation, indeed, on the summit of a freestone rock, at the foot of which runs the river Avon, rendered it extremely well calculated for purposes of defence; and its castle, which is still, perhaps, the most magnificent fortified structure in this country, in former times was almost impregnable.

Warwick is situated in the midst of a pleasant champaign country, and is approached by four great roads, from the cardinal points, which are cut through the free-stone rock. Our engraving affords a very favourable idea of the street-scenery of this place. In the distance is seen the beautiful tower of the church of St. Mary; the building in the centre is the County-Hall, and a portion of the County-Prison is seen on the extreme right. The streets are generally spacious and regular, and meet in the centre of the town, which is divided into the parishes of St. Mary and St. Nicholas, both in the diocese of Worcester.

A religious structure, dedicated to St. Mary, occupied the same place as the present, previously to the Conquest. It was partly rebuilt subsequently to that period, and rendered collegiate in conformity with the will of Henry de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick, when a dean and secular canons were established therein. It was again rebuilt by Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, at the latter end of the fourteenth century; and in the middle of the fifteenth century, a chapel of extraordinary beauty, and richness of architectural decoration was added to it, as a place of sepulture for this munificent family.

In 1694, however, the entire structure, with the exception of the choir and the chapel alluded to, was destroyed by a disastrous fire, which consumed nearly the whole town of Warwick, and caused damage to the extent of nearly £120,000. The church was in a great measure rebuilt within ten years; but with the exception of the tower, which gives an impressive effect to the edifice on a distant view, the renovation was effected in the worst possible taste. The building is cruciform; its extreme length is 186 feet; its breadth 66 feet; and the transept measures about 106 feet. The tower, which rises to a height of 130 feet, springs from four pointed arches, under which the pathway is carried, and rising in several stages, terminates in six embellished pinnacles.

The interior of the choir, which is in the most perfect state, is a very beautiful example of the decorated style of pointed (or English) architecture, of which it forms one of the most florid of existing specimens. The stalls on either side,—the lofty and elaborately-finished stone ceiling,—the many highly-interesting monuments of one of the most illustrious English families which adorn it; and the "dim religious light" which is shed over the whole, are well calculated to elevate the thoughts to the contemplation of HIM to whose honour it was built.

The most interesting feature in the structure, and which alone ought to obtain for it extensive celebrity, is the Chapel of our Lady, frequently called Beauchamp's Chapel, after its founder, already alluded to, of whose name, indeed, it is an honourable memorial. This beautiful building, which adjoins the south transept, has been pronounced to be, both "in

its external and internal embellishment, inferior only to the chapel of Henry the Seventh at Westminster." This is high praise, but it may be safely pronounced that there are few finer examples of the architectural skill of our forefathers now in existence. This fabric was completed in the third year of the reign of Edward the Fourth, at a cost of 2481*l. 4s. 7*½*d.*, apparently an insignificant sum; but it must be remembered, that wheat then sold at 3*s. 4d.* per quarter!

After glancing at the exterior, which is enriched with an open-work parapet, and buttresses of great beauty, we enter the principal room, which is 58 feet long, 25 feet wide, and rises to a height of 32 feet. The roof is richly groined, and enriched with fan-tracery. In the centre stands the monument of the founder, which has been pronounced by Mr. Britton, inferior to none in England except that of Henry the Seventh at Westminster Abbey. It is an altar-tomb of gray marble, most elaborately enriched with niches, and various decorations in the purest taste; on the slab is a figure of the Earl of Warwick, one of the distinguished characters of the fifteenth century, in the proportions of life, composed of brass, gilt. The splendid monument of another celebrated person, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester\*, who died in 1588, is an historical memento of high interest, especially to the readers of one of Sir Walter Scott's most touching stories, *Kenilworth*. The altar-screen of the chapel is adorned with a *basso relivo* of the Annunciation of the Virgin; on either side of which is "a shrine of the most delicate and elaborate workmanship." The southern side of the apartment is richly worked in panels, and the east window adorned with painted glass, the designs on which are very curious, and include a portrait of the founder. An oratory, confessional, and other rooms well deserving of inspection, adjoin the edifice.

To the north of the church, is a venerable building called the chapter-house; which is appropriated to the somewhat opposite purposes of a mausoleum, and a national school; the latter being situated in what was formerly a chapel, in the upper story of the edifice. St. Mary's is a vicarage, in the patronage of the crown; it is valued in the king's books at 20*l.* a year. The parish church of St. Nicholas, which was rebuilt about half a century since, is distinguished by a tower and spire, but it has no pretensions to architectural beauty.

The COUNTY HALL is situated in Northgate street. The façade, which is constructed of freestone, is enriched with Corinthian pilasters, with a central portico of the same order, surmounted by a bold triangular pediment. The Hall, or principal room, is 110 feet in length, and 45 in width, and is very elegantly ornamented; the civil and criminal courts are on either side; they are neat and commodious.

The exterior of the County Gaol which adjoins the hall, is also of stone, but the order is Doric. The bridewell for the county, adjoins this edifice, its internal arrangements and management are equally deserving of commendation. The male prisoners are chiefly engaged in drawing and preparing wire, for the manufacture of pins, which are headed by the boys and women. Amongst the curiosities of the place, is a large oven, capable of baking 400 loaves at one time. The Town Sessions-House (in which are assembly-rooms,) in High-Street, is also a neat edifice, in the Grecian style of architecture, well calculated for public purposes. Warwick was made a corporate town in 1554; its population, according to the census of 1831, is 9109.

\* See Saturday Magazine, Vol. I., p. 101.

Few places of equal size, can boast of as many public charities as Warwick ; amongst other endowments, are upwards of forty alms-houses, for aged women. The excellent charity of Sir Thomas White, for the assistance of young tradesmen, by aiding them

with a loan of 100*l.* (to be repaid in nine years,) on entering into business, is also to be found here.

Many very interesting events have occurred in the history of Warwick ; which has given birth to several illustrious individuals ; and its castle, which



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, AND THE TOWN-HALL, WARWICK.

adjoins the southern side of the town, is a striking evidence of the magnificence of the nobles in feudal times, alone recalling a host of stirring historical recollections. It is remarkable also, not only from its great extent, and its almost perfect condition, but

from its very high antiquity, some parts of the structure having been ascribed (though perhaps erroneously,) even to Roman origin. We shall take an early opportunity of making our readers better acquainted with this splendid strong-hold.

### ADVENTURES OF A BRITISH OFFICER DURING THE PENINSULAR WAR.

CAPTAIN Colquhoun Grant, a celebrated scouting officer was sent by Lord Wellington to watch Marshal Marmont's proceedings. Attended by Leon, a Spanish peasant of great fidelity and quickness of apprehension, who had been his companion on many former occasions of the same nature, Grant arrived in the Salamanca district, and passing the Tormes in the night, remained, in uniform, for he never assumed any disguise, three days in the midst of the French camp. He thus obtained exact information of Marmont's object, and more especially of his preparations of provisions and scaling ladders, notes of which he sent to Lord Wellington, from day to day, by Spanish agents. However, on the third night, some peasants brought him a general order, addressed to the French regiments, and saying, that the notorious Grant, being within the circle of their cantonments, the soldiers were to use their utmost efforts to secure him, for which purpose, also, guards were placed in a circle round the army. Nothing daunted by this news, Grant consulted with the peasants, and the next morning, before daylight, entered the village of Huerta, which is close to the ford on the Tormes, and about six miles from Salamanca. Here was a French battalion, and on the opposite side of the river, cavalry videttes were posted, two of which constantly patrolled back and forward, for the space of three hundred yards, meeting always at the ford.

When day broke, the French battalion assembled on its alarm-post, and at that moment Grant was secretly brought with his horse behind the gable of a house, which hid him from the infantry, and was opposite to the ford. The peasants, standing on some loose stones, and spreading their large cloaks, covered him from the cavalry videttes, and thus he calmly waited until the latter were separated to the full extent of their beat; then putting spurs to his horse, he dashed through the ford between them, and receiving their fire without damage, reached a wood not very distant, where the pursuit was baffled, and where he was soon rejoined by Leon, who in his native dress met with no interruption. Grant had already ascertained that the means of storming Ciudad Rodrigo were prepared, and that the French officers openly talked of doing so, but he desired still further to test this project, and to discover if the march of the enemy might not finally be directed by the pass of Perales, towards the Tagus; he wished also to ascertain more correctly their real numbers, and therefore placed himself on a wooded hill, near Tamames, where the road branches off to the passes, and to Ciudad Rodrigo. Here lying perdue, until the whole French army had passed, he noted every battalion and gun, and finding that all were directed towards Ciudad, entered Tamames after they had passed, and discovered that they had left the greatest part of their scaling-ladders behind, which clearly proved that the intention of storming Ciudad Rodrigo was not real. This allayed Wellington's fears for that fortress. When Marmont afterwards passed the Coa, in this expedition, Grant preceded him, with intent to discover if his march would be by Guarda upon Coimbra, or by Sabugal upon Castello Branca. Upon one of the inferior ridges in the pass of Penamacor, this persevering officer placed himself, thinking that the dwarf oaks, with which the hills were covered, would effectually secure him from discovery; but from the higher ridge above, the French detected all his movements with their glasses. In a few moments, Leon, whose lynx-eyes were always

on the watch, called out, "The French, the French!" and pointed to the rear, whence some dragoons came galloping up. Grant and his follower instantly darted into the wood, for a little space, and then suddenly wheeling, rode off in a different direction, yet at every turn new enemies appeared, and at last the hunted men dismounted, and fled on foot through the thickest of the low oaks: but again they were met by infantry, who had been detached in small parties down the sides of the pass, and were directed in their chase, by the waving of the French officers' hats on the ridge above. At last Leon fell exhausted, and the barbarians who first came up, killed him, in spite of his companion's intreaties. Grant himself, they carried, without injury, to Marmont, who, receiving him with apparent kindness, invited him to dinner. The conversation turned upon the prisoner's exploits, and the French marshal affirmed that he had been for a long time on the watch, that he knew all his haunts, and his disguises, and had discovered, that only the night before, he had slept in the French head-quarters, with other adventures which had not happened, for this Grant never used any disguise; but there was another Grant, also very remarkable in his way, who used to remain for months in the French quarters, using all manner of disguises; hence the similarity of names caused the actions of both to be attributed to one, which is the only palliation for Marmont's subsequent conduct.

Treating his prisoner, as I have said, with great apparent kindness, the French general exacted from him an especial parole, that he would not consent to be released by the Patridas, while on his journey through Spain to France, which secured his captive, although Lord Wellington offered 2000 dollars to any Guerilla chief who should rescue him. The exaction of such a parole, however harsh, was in itself a tacit compliment to the man; but Marmont also sent a letter, with the escort, to the governor of Bayonne, in which, still labouring under the error that there was only one Grant, he designated his captive a dangerous spy, who had done infinite mischief to the French army, and whom he had only not executed on the spot, out of respect to something resembling an uniform, which he wore at the time of his capture. He therefore desired, that at Bayonne he should be placed in irons, and sent up to Paris. This proceeding was too little in accord with the honour of the French army to be supported, and, before the Spanish frontier was passed, Grant, it matters not how, was made acquainted with the contents of the letter. Now the custom at Bayonne, in ordinary cases, was for the prisoner to wait on the authorities, and receive a passport to travel to Verdun, and all this was duly accomplished; meanwhile, the delivery of the fatal letter being, by certain means, delayed, Grant, with a wonderful readiness and boldness, resolved not to escape towards the Pyrenees, thinking he would naturally be pursued in that direction. He judged, that if the governor of Bayonne could not recapture him at once, he would, for his own security, suppress the letter, in hopes the matter would be no farther thought of; judging, I say, in this acute manner, he, on the instant, inquired at the hotels, if any French officer was going to Paris, and finding that General Souham, then on his return from Spain, was so bent, he boldly introduced himself, and asked permission to join his party. The other readily assented; and, while thus travelling, the general, unacquainted with Marmont's intentions, often rallied his companion about his adventures, little thinking he was then himself an instrument in forwarding the most dangerous and skilful of them all.

In passing through Orleans, Grant, by a species of intuition, discovered an English agent, and from him received recommendation to another secret agent in Paris, whose assistance would be necessary to his final escape; for he looked upon Marmont's double-dealing, and the expressed design to take away his life, as equivalent to a discharge of his parole, which was moreover only given with respect to Spain. When he arrived at Paris, he took leave of Souham, opened an intercourse with the Parisian agent, from whom he obtained money, and, by his advice, avoided appearing before the police, to have his passport examined. He took a lodging in a very public street, frequented the coffee-houses, and even visited the theatres without fear, because the secret agent, who had been long established, and was intimately connected with the police, had ascertained that no inquiry about his escape had been set on foot.

In this manner he passed several weeks, at the end of which the agent informed him, that a passport was ready for one Jonathan Buck, an American, who had died suddenly, the very day it was to have been claimed. Seizing this occasion, Grant boldly demanded the passport, with which he instantly departed for the mouth of the Loire, because certain reasons, not necessary to mention, led him to expect more assistance there than at any other port.

However, new difficulties awaited him, and were overcome by fresh exertions of his surprising talents, which fortune seemed to delight in aiding. He first took a passage for America in a ship of that nation, but its departure being unexpectedly delayed, he frankly explained his true situation to the captain, who desired him to assume the character of a discontented seaman, and giving him a sailor's dress and forty dollars, sent him to lodge the money in the American consul's hands, as a pledge that he would prosecute the captain for ill-usage, when he reached the American States; this being the custom on such occasions, the consul gave him a certificate, which enabled him to pass from port to port, as a discharged sailor seeking a ship. Thus provided, after waiting some days, Grant prevailed upon a boatman, by a promise of ten Napoleons, to row him in the night towards a small island, where, by usage, the English vessels watered unmolested, and in return, permitted the few inhabitants to fish and traffic without interruption. In the night, the boat sailed, the masts of the British ships were dimly seen on the other side of the island, and the termination of his toils appeared at hand, when the boatman, either from fear or malice, suddenly put about, and returned to port. In such a situation, some men would have striven in desperation to force fortune, and so have perished; the spirit of others would have sunk in despair: for the money he had promised, was all which remained of his stock, and the boatman, notwithstanding his breach of contract, demanded the whole; but with inexpressible coolness and resolution, Grant gave him one Napoleon instead of ten, and a rebuke for his misconduct. The other having threatened a reference to the police, soon found he was no match in subtlety for his opponent, who told him plainly, he would then denounce him as aiding the escape of a prisoner of war, and adduce the great price of his boat as a proof of his guilt!

This menace was too formidable to be resisted, and Grant in a few days engaged an old fisherman, who faithfully performed his bargain. But now there were no English vessels near the island; however, the fisherman cast his nets and caught some fish, with which he sailed towards the southward, where he had heard there was an English ship of war. In a

few hours they obtained a glimpse of her, and were steering that way, when a shot from a coast-battery brought them to, and a boat with soldiers put off to board them. The fisherman was true; he called Grant his son, and the soldiers, by whom they expected to be arrested, were only sent to warn them not to pass the battery, because the English vessel they were in search of, was on the coast. The old man who had expected this, bribed the soldiers with his fish, assuring them, he must go with his son or they would starve, and that he was so well acquainted with the coast, he could always escape the enemy. His prayers and presents prevailed, he was desired to wait under the battery till night, and then depart; but, under pretence of arranging his escape from the English vessel, he made the soldiers point out her bearings so exactly, that, when darkness came, he ran her straight on board, and the intrepid officer stood in safety on the quarter-deck.

After this Grant reached England, and obtained permission to choose a French officer, of equal rank with himself, to send to France, that no doubt might remain about the propriety of his escape; and great was his astonishment to find, in the first prison he visited, the old fisherman and his real son, who had, meanwhile, been captured, notwithstanding a protection given to them for their services. Grant, whose generosity and benevolence were as remarkable as the qualities of his understanding, soon obtained their release, and, having sent them with a sum of money to France, returned himself to the Peninsula, and, *within four months from the date of his capture*, was again on the Tormes, watching Marmont's army! This generous and spirited, yet gentle-minded man, having served his country nobly and ably in every climate, died, not long since, exhausted by the continual hardships he had endured.

[NAPIER'S *Peninsular War.*]

#### OUR COUNTRY AND OUR HOME.

THERE is a land, of ev'ry land the pride,  
Belov'd by heav'n, o'er all the world beside;  
Where brighter suns dispense serener light,  
And milder moons emparadise the night;  
A land of beauty, virtue, valour, truth,  
Time-tutor'd age, and love-exalted youth:  
The wand'ring mariner, whose eye explores  
The wealthiest isles, the most enchanting shores,  
Views not a realm so beautiful and fair,  
Nor breathes the spirit of a pryer air;  
In ev'ry clime the magnet of his soul,  
Touch'd by remembrance, trembles to that pole:  
For in this land of heaven's peculiar grace,  
The heritage of nature's noblest race,  
There is a spot of earth supremely blest,  
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest,  
Where man, creation's tyrant, casts aside  
His sword and sceptre, pageantry and pride,  
While in his soften'd looks benignly blend  
The sire, the son, the husband, father, friend:  
Here woman reigns; the mother, daughter, wife,  
Strews with fresh flow'rs the narrow way of life;  
In the clear heavn' of her delightful eye,  
An angel-guard of loves and graces lie;  
Around her knees domestic duties meet,  
And fireside-pleasures gambol at her feet.  
" Where shall that land, that spot of earth be found?"  
Art thou a man?—a patriot?—look around;  
O, thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,  
That land thy country, and that spot thy home.

MONTGOMERY.

THE water-lily in the midst of waters, lifts up its broad leaves, and expands its petals at the first patterning of the shower, and rejoices in the rain with a quicker sympathy than the parched shrub in the sandy desert.—COLEBRIDGE.

## AN ALLIGATOR HUNT IN CEYLON.

In our second volume, we gave some account of the Alligator: we now propose giving a detail of the hunting that formidable creature, as described by Captain Basil Hall. It was got up for the amusement of the Admiral, Sir S. Hood, and performed by a corps of Malays in the British service.

Very early in the morning, the party were summoned from their beds, to set forth on the expedition. In other countries, the hour of getting up may be left to choice; in India, when any thing active is to be done, it is a matter of necessity; for after the sun has gained even a few degrees of altitude, the heat and discomfort, as well as the danger of exposure, become so great, that all pleasure is at an end. The day, therefore, had scarcely begun to dawn, when we all cantered up to the scene of action.

The ground lay as flat as a marsh for many leagues, and was spotted with small stagnant lakes, connected by sluggish streams, scarcely moving over beds of mud, between banks fringed with a rank crop of draggled weeds. The chill atmosphere of the morning felt so thick and clammy, it was impossible not to think of agues, jungle-fevers, and all the hopeful family of malaria. The hardy native soldiers who had occupied the ground during the night, were drawn up to receive the Admiral, and a very queer guard of honour they formed. The whole regiment had stripped off their uniform, and every other stich of clothing, save a pair of short trousers, and a kind of sandal. In place of a firelock, each man bore in his hand a slender pole, about six feet in length, to the extremity of which was attached the bayonet of his musket. His only other weapon, was the formidable Malay crease, a sort of dagger, or small two-edged sword.

Soon after the commander-in-chief came to the ground, the regiment was divided into two main parties, and a body of reserves. The principal columns, facing, one to the right, the other to the left, proceeded to occupy different points in one of the sluggish canals, connecting the pools scattered over the plain. These detachments being stationed about a mile from one another, enclosed an interval where, from some peculiar circumstances known only to the Malays, who are passionately fond of the sport, the alligators were sure to be found in great numbers. The troops formed themselves across the canals, in three parallel lines, ten or twelve feet apart; but the men in each line stood side by side, merely leaving room enough to wield their pikes. The canal may have been about four or five feet deep, in the middle of the stream, if stream it can be called, which scarcely moved at all. The colour of the water, when undisturbed, was a shade between ink and coffee; but no sooner had the triple line of Malays set themselves in motion, than the consistence and colour, became like those of peas-soup.

On every thing being reported ready, the soldiers planted their pikes before them in the mud, each man crossing his neighbour's weapon, and at the word "march," away they all started in full cry, sending forth a shout, or war-whoop, sufficient to curdle the blood of those on land, whatever effect it may have had on the inhabitants of the deep. As the two divisions of the invading army gradually approached each other in pretty close column, screaming, and yelling, and striking their pikes deep in the slime before them, the startled animals naturally retired towards the unoccupied centre. Generally speaking, the alligators, or crocodiles, had sense enough to turn their long tails upon their assailants, and to scuttle off, as fast as they could, towards the middle

part of the canal. But every now and then, one of the terrified monsters floundered backwards, and, by retreating in the wrong direction, broke through the first, second, and even third line of pikes. This was the perfection of sport to the delighted Malays. A double circle of soldiers was speedily formed round the wretched aquatic who had presumed to pass the barrier. By means of well-directed thrusts with numberless bayonets, and the pressure of some dozens of feet, the poor brute was often fairly driven beneath his native mud. When once there, his enemies half-choked and half-spitted him, till at last, they put an end to his miserable days, in regions quite out of sight, and in a manner as inglorious as can well be conceived.

The intermediate space was now pretty well crowded with alligators, swimming about in the utmost terror, at times diving below, and anon showing their noses above the surface of the dirty stream; or occasionally making a furious bolt, in sheer despair, right at the phalanx of Malays. On these occasions, half-a-dozen of the soldiers were often upset, and their pikes either broken or twisted out of their hands, to the infinite amusement of their companions, who speedily closed up the broken ranks. There were none killed, but many wounded; yet no man flinched in the least.

The perfection of the sport appeared to consist in detaching a single alligator from the rest, surrounding and attacking him separately, and spearing him till he was almost dead. The Malays, then, by main strength, forked him aloft, over their heads, on the end of a dozen pikes, and, by a sudden jerk, pitched the conquered monster far on the shore. As the alligators are amphibious, they kept to the water no longer than they found they had an advantage in that element; but on the two columns of their enemy closing up, the monsters lost all discipline, floundered up the weedy banks, scuttling away to the right and left, helter-skelter. "Save qui peut!" seemed to be the fatal watch-word for their total rout. That prudent cry would, no doubt, have saved many of them, had not the Malays judiciously placed beforehand their reserve on each side of the river, to receive the distracted fugitives, who, bathed in mud, and half dead with terror, but still in a prodigious fury, dashed off at right angles from the canal, in hopes of gaining the shelter of a swampy pool, overgrown with reeds and bulrushes, but which most of the poor beasts were never doomed to reach. The concluding battle between these retreating and desperate alligators, and the Malays of the reserve, was formidable enough. Indeed, had not the one party been fresh, the other exhausted; one confident, the other broken in spirit; it is quite possible that the crocodiles might have worsted the Malays. It was difficult, indeed, to say which of the two looked at that moment the more savage; the triumphant natives, or the flying troop of alligators wallowing away from the water. Many on both sides were wounded, and all covered with slime and weeds. There could not have been fewer than thirty or forty alligators killed. The largest measured ten feet in length, and four feet girth, the head being exactly two feet long. Besides these great fellows, a multitude of little ones, nine inches long, were caught alive, many of which, being carried on board, became great favourites amongst the sailors, whose queer taste in the choice of pets has frequently been noticed.

[CAPTAIN BASIL HALL.]

LONDON:  
JOHN WILLIAM PARKER, WEST STRAND.  
PUBLISHED IN WEEKLY NUMBERS, PRICE ONE PENNY, AND IN MONTHLY PARTS  
PRICE SIXPENCE, AND  
Sold by all Booksellers and News-venders in the Kingdom.